

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of managing a workflow based on process definition information, comprising the steps of:

5 managing execution of a plurality of activities in a process based on process definition information, said process definition information defining said plurality of activities and a processing sequence between said plurality of activities, and
10 holding execution history information on said plurality of executed activities;

corresponding an activity set included in a workflow defined by said process definition information to a pricing scheme for a user associated with the
15 execution of said activity set, and holding the correspondence as activity set pricing definition information commonly applied for activity definitions included in said activity set; and

calculating a pricing amount for the user
20 based on said activity set pricing definition information.

2. A workflow management method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of:

providing a relation, as an entry between
25 each user and said activity set pricing definition information.

3. A workflow management method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of:

calculating said pricing amount using a history table having a record for execution of each said activity set, and a state management table for storing a state of the execution of said each activity set.

4. A workflow management method according to claim 3, further comprising the steps of:

providing a table for holding fee calculated in accordance with the number of times of passages in an activity set for execution; and

including fee pricing variable in said pricing amount.

5. A workflow management method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

counting the number of times at least one activity set included in said workflow is passed for execution;

providing a memory for holding fee calculated in accordance with the number of times of passages for execution; and

including fee pricing variable in said pricing amount.

6. A workflow management method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

providing a memory for holding an execution time for execution of at least one activity set included in said workflow; and

including fee pricing variable in said

1005533-0110

pricing amount.

7. A workflow management method according to claim 6, further comprising the step of:

5 defining a pricing scheme for a definition set including one or a plurality of activity definitions to be commonly applied thereto.

8. A workflow management method according to claim 7, further comprising the step of:

10 defining said pricing scheme for respective process definitions each coupled to an activity definition commonly when said process definitions are the same each other.

9. A workflow management method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of:

15 defining a pricing scheme for a definition set including one or a plurality of activity definitions to be commonly applied thereto.

10. A workflow management method according to claim 9, further comprising the step of:

20 defining said pricing scheme for respective process definitions each coupled to an activity definition commonly when said process definitions are the same each other.

11. A workflow management program which is read
25 into and run on an apparatus for managing a workflow based on process definition information, said program comprising the steps of:

managing execution of a plurality of

10059337 044103

activities in a process based on process definition
information, said process definition information
defining said plurality of activities and a processing
sequence between said plurality of activities, and
5 holding execution history information on said plurality
of executed activities;

corresponding an arbitrary activity set
included in a workflow defined by said process
definition information to a pricing scheme for a user
10 associated with the execution of said activity set, and
holding the correspondence as activity set pricing
definition information; and

calculating a pricing amount for the user
based on said activity set pricing definition
15 information.

12. A workflow management program according to
claim 11, further comprising the step of:

providing a pricing scheme setting unit name
corresponding to a process definition name in a
20 activity set for each user, as an entry, in said
activity set pricing definition information.

13. A workflow management program according to
claim 11, further comprising the step of:

calculating said pricing amount using a
25 history table having a record for execution of each
said activity set, and a state management table for
storing a state of the execution of said each activity
set.

14. A workflow management program according to claim 11, further comprising the step of:

defining a pricing scheme for a definition set including one or a plurality of activity

5 definitions to be commonly applied thereto.

15. A workflow management program according to claim 14, further comprising the step of:

defining said pricing scheme for respective process definitions each coupled to an activity

10 definition commonly when said process definitions are the same each other.

16. An apparatus for managing a workflow based on process definition information, comprising:

a CPU;

15 a workflow execution control engine for controlling execution of said workflow including a plurality of activity sets;

a table for holding execution history information on a plurality of activities in a process, associated with the execution of said plurality of activities based on process definition information, said process definition information defining said plurality of activities and a processing sequence between said plurality of activities; and

25 a table for corresponding an arbitrary activity set included in a workflow defined by said process definition information to a pricing scheme for a user associated with the execution of said activity

10059327-013100

set, and holding the correspondence as activity set pricing definition information,

wherein a pricing amount for the user is added based on said activity set pricing definition
5 information.

17. A workflow management apparatus according to claim 16, wherein:

said activity set pricing definition information has a pricing scheme setting unit name
10 corresponding to a process definition name in a activity set for each user as an entry.

18. A workflow management apparatus according to claim 16, further comprising:

a history table having a record for execution
15 of each said activity set, and a state management table for storing a state of the execution of said each activity set,

wherein said workflow management apparatus calculates said pricing amount using said state
20 management table.

19. A workflow management apparatus according to claim 18, further comprising:

a pricing scheme setting unit definition information table for holding the number of times
25 counted for passages of at least one activity set included in said workflow for execution,

wherein said workflow management apparatus includes variable fee pricing in said pricing amount

1059327-013403

based on said table.

20. A workflow management apparatus according to claim 16, further comprising:

a first pricing scheme setting unit

5 definition information table for holding the number of times counted for passages of at least one activity set included in said workflow for execution,

wherein said workflow management apparatus includes variable fee pricing in said pricing amount
10 based on said table.

21. A workflow management apparatus according to claim 16, further comprising:

a second pricing scheme setting unit

definition information table for holding an execution
15 time for execution of at least one activity set included in said workflow

wherein said workflow management apparatus includes variable fee pricing in said pricing amount based on said table.

20 22. A workflow management apparatus according to claim 21, further comprising:

means for defining a pricing scheme for a definition set including one or a plurality of activity definitions to be commonly applied thereto.

25 23. A workflow management apparatus according to claim 22, further comprising:

means for defining said pricing scheme for respective process definitions each coupled to an

activity definition commonly when said process definitions are the same each other.

24. A workflow management apparatus according to claim 16, further comprising:

5 means for defining a pricing scheme for a definition set including one or a plurality of activity definitions to be commonly applied thereto.

25. A workflow management apparatus according to claim 24, further comprising:

10 means for defining said pricing scheme for respective process definitions each coupled to an activity definition commonly when said process definitions are the same each other.

26. A storage medium having stored thereon a
15 workflow management program in CPU readable codes, said workflow management program, when read into and run on an apparatus for managing a workflow based on process definition information, executing:

a code representing a step of managing
20 execution of a plurality of activities in a process based on process definition information, said process definition information defining said plurality of activities and a processing sequence between said plurality of activities, and holding execution history
25 information on said plurality of executed activities;

a code representing a step of corresponding an arbitrary activity set included in a workflow defined by said process definition information to a

10059337.01101

pricing scheme for a user associated with the execution of said activity set, and holding the correspondence as activity set pricing definition information; and

5 a code representing a step of calculating a pricing amount for the user based on said activity set pricing definition information.

10059327.013103